IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPELLANT :	Ping H. KUI et al.	CONFIRMATION NO.:	7836
SERIAL NUMBER :	10/759,443	EXAMINER:	Ryan F. Pitaro
FILING DATE :	January 15, 2004	ART UNIT:	2174
FOR :	SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR BRIDGE PORT ADMINISTRATION		

Appellant's Brief on Appeal Under 37 C.F.R. § 41.37

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

Further to the Notice of Appeal dated **November 27, 2007**, Appellant hereby submits this Appellant's Brief on Appeal pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 41.37.

The Director is authorized to charge the fee for filing an Appeal Brief pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 41.20(b)(2), as well as any additional fees that may be due, or credit any overpayment of same, to Deposit Account No. 033975 (**Ref. No. 019287-0319647**).

Appeal Brief Under 37 C.F.R. § 41.37

I. Real Party in Interest

By virtue of the Assignment recorded June 9, 2004, at Reel 015446, Frame 0621, Computer Associates Think, Inc., the assignee of the present application, is the real party in interest.

II. Related Appeals and Interferences

Appellant is not aware of any related appeals or interferences.

III. Status of Claims

Pending: Claims 1-36 are pending.

Cancelled: No Claims have been cancelled.

Rejected: Claims 1-36 stand rejected.

Allowed: No claims have been allowed.

On Appeal: Claims 1-36 are appealed.

IV. Status of Amendments

No amendments to the claims have been filed subsequent to the Final Office Action dated August 27, 2007 (hereinafter "Final Action").

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The following exemplary citations to the Specification and/or drawing figures are not exclusive, as other examples of support for claimed subject matter exist. As such, the following citations should not be viewed as limiting.

Independent Claim 1

According to various aspects of the invention, as recited in claim 1, for example, a method for administering bridge ports for a network may be provided (e.g., Specification at 3, lines 1-5). For administering the bridge ports of the network, the method of claim 1 may

include, among other things, retrieving information associated with a plurality of switches (e.g., Specification at 8, lines 8-10), the information including at least identifiers of bridging ports of the switches (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 20-23) and statuses of the bridging ports (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 19-25, Specification at 11, lines 21-24). The information for the plurality of switches may be displayed through an interactive display (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 23-31, Specification at 10, lines 17-19, and Figure 2).

Updates to at least one propagation status of at least one of the bridging ports of at least one of the switches may be received through the interactive display (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 28-31). The propagation status may include an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 1-2). The at least one propagation status may be changed based on the updates. The changed at least one propagation status may be displayed through the interactive display (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 2-5).

Independent Claim 12

According to various aspects of the invention, as recited in claim 12, for example, software for displaying information associated with network elements in an enterprise system may be provided (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 23-25). For example, the software may be operable to retrieve information associated with a plurality of switches (e.g., Specification at 8, lines 8-10), wherein each switch of the plurality of switches includes one or more bridge ports (e.g., Figure 1, and Specification at 8, lines 19-20), wherein the information associated with the plurality of switches includes at least identifiers of bridge ports of each switch (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 20-23) and propagation statuses of the bridge ports (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 19-25, Specification at 11, lines 21-24). The propagation status may include an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 1-2).

The information for the plurality of switches may be displayed through an interactive display (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 23-31, Specification at 10, lines 17-19, and Figure 2). Updates to at least one propagation status of at least one of the bridge ports of at least one of

the switches may be received through the interactive display (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 28-31). The at least one propagation status may be changed based on the updates. The changed at least one propagation status may be displayed through the interactive display (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 2-5).

Independent Claim 23

According to various aspects of the invention, as recited in claim 23, for example, a system for displaying information associated with network elements in an enterprise system may be provided (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 23-25). For example, the system may store information associated with a plurality of network elements (e.g., Specification at 7, lines 15-27), the network elements including a plurality of switches (e.g., Specification at 5, lines 25-26), wherein each switch of the plurality of switches includes one or more bridge ports (e.g., Figure 1, and Specification at 8, lines 19-20), wherein the information associated with the plurality of switches includes at least identifiers of bridge ports of each switch (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 20-23) and propagation statuses of the bridge ports (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 19-25, Specification at 11, lines 21-24). The propagation status may include an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 1-2).

Information associated with a plurality of switches may be retrieved (e.g., Specification at 8, lines 8-10). The information for the plurality of switches may be displayed through an interactive display (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 23-31, Specification at 10, lines 17-19, and Figure 2). Updates to at least one propagation status of at least one of the bridge ports of at least one of the switches may be received through the interactive display (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 28-31). The at least one propagation status may be changed based on the updates. The changed at least one propagation status may be displayed through the interactive display (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 2-5).

Independent Claim 34

According to various aspects of the invention, as recited in claim 34, for example, a method for displaying information associated with switches in an enterprise system may be provided (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 23-25). The method of claim 34 may include, among other things, retrieving information associated with a plurality of switches (e.g., Specification at 8, lines 8-10), wherein each switch of the plurality of switches includes one or more bridge ports (e.g., Figure 1, and Specification at 8, lines 19-20), wherein the information associated with the plurality of switches includes at least identifiers of bridge ports of each switch (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 20-23) and propagation statuses of the bridge ports (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 19-25, Specification at 11, lines 21-24). The propagation status may include an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 1-2).

The retrieved identifiers of the bridge ports may be displayed in a hierarchical tree structure through an interactive display. The hierarchical display may comprise a first window and a second window, the first window comprising a hierarchical tree structure of all managed switches, the second window comprising a tabular display of bridge port information of a managed switch selected in the hierarchical tree structure (e.g., Figure 2, and Specification at 10, line 16 – 11, line 24).

Updates to at least one propagation status of at least one of the bridge ports of at least one of the switches may be received through the interactive display (e.g., Specification at 9, lines 28-31). The at least one propagation status may be changed based on the updates. The changed at least one propagation status may be displayed through the interactive display (e.g., Specification at 10, lines 2-5).

VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

(1) Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9-13, 15-16, 20-24, 26-27, and 31-36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,771,288 to Boulter

("Boulter") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0065814 to Ishii ("Ishii"), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,968,363 to Mulvey ("Mulvey"). Final Action at 2-6.

(2) Claims 3, 6, 7, 8, 14, 17, 18, 19, 25, 28, 29, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Boulter in view of Ishii and Mulvey, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,999,179 to Kekic et al. ("Kekic"). Final Action at 6-8.

VII. Argument

A. *The Rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9-13, 15-16, 20-24, 26-27, and 31-36 Should be Reversed Because the Examiner has Failed to Establish a* Prima Facie *Case of Obviousness.*

i) Independent Claims 1, 12, and 23

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9-13, 15-16, 20-24, 26-27, and 31-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Boulter in view of Ishii, and further in view of Mulvey. Final Action at 2-6. This rejection is improper, and must be reversed, for at least the reason that the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, as the references relied upon, either alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest every feature of the claimed invention.

More particularly, neither Boulter, Ishii, nor Mulvey, either alone or in combination, disclose, teach, or suggest *at least* the following features of claim 1, for example: "displaying the information for the plurality of switches through an interactive display"; "wherein the propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status"; and "displaying the changed at least one propagation status through the interactive display".

Contrary to the allegations by the Examiner: 1) Boulter fails to disclose, teach or suggest that the "propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status"; 2) The combination of Boulter and Ishii fails to teach or

suggest "displaying the information for the plurality of switches"; and 3) The combination of Boulter, Ishii, and Mulvey fails to teach or suggest "displaying the changed at least one propagation status through an interactive display".

First, the Examiner erroneously alleges that Boulter teaches the feature "wherein the propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status", of claim 1. The Examiner relies on column 7, lines 20-67 and column 8, lines 35-58, of Boulter for this feature. At page 8 of the Final Action, the Examiner asserts that "Boulter teaches that ... [a] user is at a liberty to enter a polling rate of zero, therefore indicating to the user whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status." Appellant disagrees with the Examiner's assessment as there is no basis in Boulter for this statement.

Boulter apparently describes, a user inputting a polling rate to specify the rate at which the Ethernet port statuses are polled and sub-images refreshed (*See*, column 7, lines 29-35 of Boulter). For example, if a polling rate of 30 seconds is input by the user (i.e., the time period between polls is 30 seconds), the statuses of **all** the Ethernet ports of a device will be polled every 30 seconds and the status sub-images will be refreshed (*See*, column 11, lines 61-65 of Boulter). Accordingly, if a polling rate of **zero** is input by the user, this would imply that the time period between polls is zero seconds and that the statuses of **all** the Ethernet ports of the device will be polled **continuously** (every zero seconds). Thus, the user inputting a polling rate of zero does not indicate *whether or not a port should be polled*. To the contrary, in Boulter, regardless of the value the user inputs as the polling rate, the statuses of **all** the Ethernet ports will **always** be polled, and only the frequency with which the statuses are polled (i.e., polling rate) may differ based on the value input by the user. In contrast, it is a feature of the claimed invention that the propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled, thus allowing, e.g., updating of the status of a group of ports without polling all of the ports.

Furthermore, column 8, lines 35-38 of Boulter apparently describes a port setup portion that displays a port status control sub-image, which the user can activate to control the network device. There is no mention of polling of ports, much less, a propagation status

including an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status.

For at least these reasons, Boulter fails to teach or suggest that the propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status. Neither Ishii nor Mulvey, address this deficiency of Boulter.

Second, the Examiner admits that Boulter fails to teach feature "displaying the information for the plurality of switches through an interactive display", of claim 1. However, the Examiner erroneously alleges that Ishii teaches "displaying the information for the plurality of switches" at lines 1-6 of paragraph 57. Final Action at 3. Paragraph 57 of Ishii recites:

> "The port correspondence table managing section 12 updates information on the basis of the result of monitoring by the bridge port state monitoring section 11 and port state information regarding an opposite unit received by the port state management control section 14 to generate port correspondence table T indicative of a new correspondence."

At best, Ishii apparently describes updating and generating the port correspondence table T based on the result of monitoring by the bridge port monitoring section and port state information regarding an opposite unit. There is no mention, in Ishii, of **displaying** any information regarding the bridges. Thus, neither Boulter nor Ishii, either alone or in combination with one another, teach the feature of "displaying the information for the plurality of switches through an interactive display," as recited in claim 1.

Third, the Examiner admits that Boulter and Ishii fail to teach the feature "displaying the changed at least one propagation status through an interactive display", of claim 1. However, the Examiner erroneously alleges that Figure 3 of Mulvey illustrates this feature. Final Action at 3. Appellant disagrees with the Examiner's assessment.

Regarding the Mulvey reference, Appellant initially notes that Mulvey generally relates to "a method for controlling the flow of **files** from a development server to another server using a **file propagation tool**..." Mulvey at Abstract. To this end, Figure 3 of Mulvey relied upon by the Examiner illustrates a file propagation tool that displays the contents a database

specified in a configuration file and indicates the current publishing status of each file. *See*, Mulvey at column 3, line 66-column 4, line 7.

Accordingly, Mulvey is non-analogous prior art as it is not in Appellent's field of endeavor, nor is it reasonbly pertinent to the particular problems with which the Appellent is faced. *See* MPEP § 2141.01(a). As such, Mulvey discloses a file propagation tool for managing and controlling the flow of documents, etc., when developing a website. A **file** propagation tool to manage **flow of documents** has nothing to do with **administration of bridge ports** for a network or with displaying information associated with **network elements** in an enterprise system, and thus, is not a reference that "logically would have commended itself to an inventor's attention in considering his problem." *See* In re Clay, 966 F.2d 656, 659, 23 USPQ2d 1058, 1060-61(Fed. Cir. 1992).

Even assuming arguendo that Mulvey is properly combinable with Boulter and Ishii (which Appellant does not concede for the reasons discussed above), Appellant submits that Figure 3 of Mulvey fails to disclose, teach or suggest the feature of "displaying the changed at least one propagation status through an interactive display", as recited in claim 1, for example. Figure 3 of Mulvey apparently illustrates a file propagation tool that displays the **publishing statuses** of **files** and not **propagation statuses** of **bridge ports**. Mulvey apparently describes that the **status of each file** may be determined by comparing the file size and the date of last modification on each of the servers of a publishing system, and the status of the file can be updated every time the file is copied or selected. *See* Mulvey at column 4, lines 6-38. Thus, Mulvey fails to disclose, teach or suggest "displaying the changed at least one propagation status through an interactive display".

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. In particular, Boulter, Ishii and Mulvey, either alone or in combination with one another, fail to disclose, teach, or suggest every feature of independent claim 1. For at least this reason, the rejection is improper and must be reversed.

Independent claims 12 and 23 include features similar to those set forth in claim 1. Thus, the arguments presented relative to claim 1 apply to claims 12 and 23 as well. As such, the rejections of these claims are likewise improper and must be reversed.

ii) Independent claim 34

The Examiner rejects claim 34 under similar rationale as claim 1. The Examiner has failed to properly reject claim 34, because even though claim 34 recites features similar to those set forth in claim 1, claim 34 additionally recites the feature "displaying all the retreived identifiers in a heirarchical tree structure through an interactive display, the interactive display comprising a first and a second window, the first window comprising a hierarchical tree structure of all managed switches, the second window comprising a tabular display of bridge port information of a managed switch selected in the hierarchical tree structure", that the Examiner has failed to address. *See*, for example, Figure 2 of the as-filed Specification.

Appellant submits that the arguments presented relative to claim 1 above, apply to features of claim 34 that are similar to claim 1. In addition, Appellant submits that neither Boulter, Ishii, nor Mulvey, either alone or in combination with one another, disclose, teach, or suggest the feature "displaying all the retreived identifiers in a hierarchical tree structure through an interactive display, the interactive display comprising a first and a second window, the first window comprising a hierarchical tree structure of all managed switches, the second window comprising a tabular display if bridge port information of a managed switch selected in the heirarchical tree structure", of claim 34, for example.

Figures 3 and 4 of Boulter apparently illustrate displaying a mimic 140 that comprises a plurality of Ethernet status sub-images 302, and fixed sub-images (e.g., labels for "port status information", etc.; numerals "1" to "24" that identify associated Ethernet port status sub-images). However, none of these images, including numerals "1" to "24", are displayed in a hierarchical tree structure. In fact, Boulter fails to disclose a hierarchical display of any kind. As such, all the status sub-images and numeral sub-images are apparently displayed as part of a simple schematic, with these images being arranged from left to right.

Moreover, the display of Boulter appears to be a single display that displays Ethernet status sub-images, fixed sub-images, user-activated poll-rate sub-image, and port status

control sub-image. Thus, Boulter fails to disclose the interactive display comprising a first and second window.

Also, because Boulter fails to teach "displaying information for plurality of switches" (as admitted by the Examiner with respect to claim 1), Boulter cannot teach or suggest, the first window comprising a **hierarchical** structure of the managed switches.

Boulter apparently describes that a user may input a particular polling rate and that the user may enable or disable a particular Ethernet port (Figures 3 and 4 of Boulter). However, Boulter fails to teach or suggest, selecting a managed switch in the hierarchical tree structure, much less, displaying the bridge port information of the selected switch in a tabular display of the second window.

Furthermore, Boulter, Ishii or Mulvey, either alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest at least the above-mentioned features of claim 34, for example.

Particularly, as mentioned above, Ishii apparently describes updating and generating the port correspondence table T, and fails to teach or suggest displaying information for the plurality of switches. Also, Mulvey has nothing to do with displaying information associated with **switches** in an enterprise system. Figure 3 of Mulvey illustrates a file propagation tool that displays contents of a database in a tree view. Section 302 of window 300 displays a tree view of **folders and files** in the database and not all managed **switches**. Section 304 of window 300 displays **publishing status** of each **file** and not **bridge port information** of a **managed switch** selected in the tree structure.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness with respect to claim 34. In particular, Boulter, Ishii and Mulvey, either alone or in combination with one another, fail to disclose, teach, or suggest every feature of independent claim 34. For at least this reason, the rejection is improper and must be reversed.

ii) Dependent claims 2, 4, 5, 9-11, 13, 15-16, 20-22, 24, 26-27, 31-33, 35-36

Claims 2, 4, 5, 9-11, 13, 15-16, 20-22, 24, 26-27, 31-33, and 35-36, depend from and add features to one of patentable claims 1, 12, 23, or 34, and thus are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies as well as for their additional features.

Moreover, with respect to claims 9, 11, 20, 22, 31, and 33, the Examiner alleges that Figure 4 of Boulter teaches that the interactive display is operable to allow a user to change the propagation status of all ports of a single switch, a plurality of ports of a single switch, and a plurality of ports of multiple switches. Appellant disagrees with the Examiner's assessment.

At best, Figure 4 of Boulter apparently describes that a user may manually enable or disable **a particular Ethernet port** in a network device (*See*, Boulter at column 8, lines 41-44). Thus, a user may enable or disable **only one** port at a time and that too for **one** network device (as admitted by the Examiner). Thus, Boulter clearly fails to teach or suggest that the propagation status of **all** ports or **plurality of ports** of a single switch may be changed, or that **plurality of ports** of **multiple** switches may be changed.

With respect to claim 35, as discussed above, Boulter, Ishii, or Mulvey, either alone or in combination with another, fail to teach or suggest that the propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridging port should be polled for its current status.

With respect to claim 36, the Examiner erroneously alleges that Boulter, Ishii and Mulvey teach the feature "the information associated with the plurality of switches further includes at least the hierarchical relationships of the plurality of switches, wherein display of the information for the plurality of switches further includes display of a hierarchical representation of the plurality of switches derived from the hierarchical relationships and wherein a representation of a switch on the hierarchical representation includes an indication of the propagation status of all bridge ports associated with the switch, wherein the indication includes a first indication when all associated bridge ports are propagating, a second indication when no associated bridge ports are propagating, and a third indication when some of the associated bridge ports are propagating."

First, Boulter apparently describes displaying status sub-images for ethernet ports of one specific device and not a plurality of switches. Furthermore, Figure 4 of Boulter apparently describes displaying a mimic formed from these status sub-images. The mimic of Boulter does not represent information associated with a plurality of switches, much less, hierarchical relationships of the plurality of switches. In fact, Boulter fails to teach hierarchical relationships of any kind.

Second, the Examiner admits at Page 3 of the Final Action that Boulter does not teach displaying the plurality of switches through its interactive display. However, with respect to claim 36, the Examiner asserts that Boulter discloses display of a hierarchical representation of the plurality of switches derived from the hierarchical relationships. Thus, the Examiner contradicts himself while rejecting Appellant's claims. Clearly, Figure 4 of Boulter does not illustrate a hierarchical representation of plurality of switches.

Third, column 12, lines 30-65 of Boulter apparently describes four possible states (0, 1, 2, 3) for each of the twenty four sub-images. Each port of a specfic device may be in one of these four states. Thus, at best, Boulter apparently describes encoding the state of each port of the device, but fails to provide an first indication indicating that **all** bridge ports associated with a switch are propagating, a second indication indicating that **none** of the bridge ports associated with a switch are propagating, and a third indication that **some** of the bridge ports associated with a switch are propagating (*See*, Specification at 11, lines 11-16).

Thus, claims 9, 11, 20, 22, 31, 33, 35, and 36 are patentable for the above-mentioned reasons as well.

B. *The Rejection of Claims 3, 6, 7, 8, 14, 17, 18, 19, 25, 28, 29, 30 Should be Reversed Because the Examiner has Failed to Establish a* Prima Facie *Case of Obviousness.*

The Examiner has rejected claims 3, 6, 7, 8, 14, 17, 18, 19, 25, 28, 29, 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Boulter, Ishii, Mulvey, and further in view of Kekic. Final Action at 6-8. This rejection is improper, and must be reversed, for at least the reason that the Examiner has failed to establish either a *prima facie* case of obviousness, as the

references relied upon, either alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest every feature of the claimed invention. For at least this reason, the rejection is improper and must be reversed.

For at the reasons discussed abve in section VII. A. i), Boulter, Ishii and Mulvey fail to disclose, teach or suggest at the least the feature of "propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its status", as recited in independent claims 1, 12, and 23. Kekic fails to cure at least this deficiency of Boulter, Ishii and Mulvey.

Furthermore, claims 3, 6, 7, 8, 14, 17, 18, 19, 25, 28, 29, and 30 depend from and add features to one of patentable independent claims 1, 12, or 23. Thus, these claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies as well as for their additional recitations.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. Thus, the rejections are improper and must be reversed.

VIII. Claims Appendix

The pending claims (claims 1-36) are attached in **Appendix A.**

IX. Evidence Appendix

Appendix B: None.

X. Related Proceedings Appendix

Appendix C: None

Conclusion

For at least the foregoing reasons, Appellant respectfully submits that the claims are clear, definite, and allowable over the references relied upon by the Examiner. Therefore, reversal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Date: **January 28, 2008**

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendix A: Claims Appendix

1. (***Previously Presented***) A method for administering bridge ports for a network, comprising:

retrieving information associated with a plurality of switches, the information including at least identifiers of bridging ports of the switches and statuses of the bridging ports;

displaying the information for the plurality of switches through an interactive display;

receiving through the interactive display updates to at least one propagation status of at least one of the bridging ports of at least one of the switches, wherein propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status;

changing the at least one propagation status based on the updates; and

displaying the changed at least one propagation status through the interactive display.

2. (***Original***) The method of Claim 1, wherein displaying the information through an interactive display comprises displaying all the retrieved identifiers of the bridging ports on a single window.

3. (***Original***) The method of Claim 2, wherein displaying all the retrieved identifiers of the bridging ports on a single window comprises displaying all the retrieved identifiers in a hierarchical tree structure.

4. (***Original***) The method of Claim 1, the information associated with the switches further comprising a switch type.

5. (***Original***) The method of Claim 1, wherein displaying the information comprises color-coding status of the bridging ports.

6. (***Original***) The method of Claim 1, the interactive display comprising a first and a second window, the first window comprising a hierarchical tree structure of all managed switches, the

second window comprising a tabular display of port information of a managed switch selected in the hierarchical tree structure.

7. (***Original***) The method of Claim 6, wherein the second window provides a field in which a user of the interactive display can view the propagation status of a plurality of ports of the managed switch selected in the hierarchical tree structure.

8. (***Previously Presented***) The method of Claim 7, wherein the propagation status of any or all ports of the managed switch is selected in the hierarchical tree structure.

9. (***Previously Presented***) The method of Claim 1, the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status of one or more of all ports of a single switch, a plurality of ports of a single switch, and a plurality of ports of multiple switches.

10. (***Original***) The method of Claim 9, wherein the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation comprises the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status from a single window.

11. (***Previously Presented***) The method of Claim 1, the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status of all ports of a single switch, a plurality of ports of a single switch, and all of ports of multiple switches.

12. (***Previously Presented***) Software for displaying information associated with network elements in an enterprise system, the software operable to:

retrieve information associated with a plurality of switches, wherein each switch of the plurality of switches includes one or more bridge ports, wherein the information associated with the plurality of switches includes at least identifiers of the bridge ports of each switch and propagation statuses of the bridge ports, and wherein propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status;

display the information for the plurality of switches through an interactive display;

receive through the interactive display updates to at least one propagation status of at least one of the bridge ports of at least one of the switches;

change the at least one propagation status based on the updates; and

displaying the changed at least one propagation status through the interactive display.

13. (***Previously Presented***) The software of Claim 12, wherein the software operable to display the information through an interactive display comprises software operable to display all the retrieved identifiers of the bridge ports on a single window.

14. (***Previously Presented***) The software of Claim 13, wherein the software operable to display all the retrieved identifiers of the bridge ports on a single window comprises the software operable to display all the retrieved identifiers in a hierarchical tree structure.

15. (***Original***) The software of Claim 13, the information associated with the switches further comprising a switch type.

16. (***Previously Presented***) The software of Claim 12, wherein the software operable to display the information comprises software operable to color-code a propagation status of the bridge ports.

17. (***Previously Presented***) The software of Claim 12, the interactive display comprising a first and a second window, the first window comprising a hierarchical tree structure of all managed switches, the second window comprising a tabular display of bridge port information of a managed switch selected in the hierarchical tree structure.

18. (***Previously Presented***) The software of Claim 17, wherein the second window provides a field in which a user of the interactive display can view the propagation status of a plurality of bridge ports of the managed switch selected in the hierarchical tree structure.

19. (***Previously Presented***) The software of Claim 18, the propagation status of any or all bridge ports of the managed switch is selected in the hierarchical tree structure.

20. (***Previously Presented***) The software of Claim 12, the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status of one or more of all bridge ports of a single switch, a plurality of bridge ports of a single switch, and a plurality of bridge ports of multiple switches.

21. (***Previously Presented***) The software of Claim 20, wherein the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status comprises the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status from a single window.

22. (***Previously Presented***) The software of Claim 12, the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status of all bridge ports of a single switch, a plurality of bridge ports of a single switch, and all of bridge ports of multiple switches.

23. (***Previously Presented***) A system for displaying information associated with network elements in an enterprise system, comprising:

memory operable to store information associated with a plurality of network elements in the enterprise system, the network elements including a plurality switches, wherein each switch of the plurality of switches includes one or more bridge ports, wherein the information associated with the plurality of switches includes at least identifiers of the bridge ports of each switch and propagation statuses of the bridge ports, and wherein propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status; and

one or more processors collectively operable to:

retrieve the information associated with at least a subset of the plurality of switches;

display the retrieved information through an interactive display;

receive through the interactive display updates to at least one propagation status of at least one of the bridge ports of at least one of the switches;

change the at least one propagation status based on the updates; and

displaying the changed at least one propagation status through the interactive display.

24. (***Previously Presented***) The system of Claim 23, wherein processors operable to display the information through an interactive display comprise processors operable to display all the retrieved identifiers of the bridge ports on a single window.

25. (***Previously Presented***) The system of Claim 24, wherein the processors operable to display all the retrieved identifiers of the bridge ports on a single window comprise processors operable to display all the retrieved identifiers in a hierarchical tree structure.

26. (***Original***) The system of Claim 23, the information associated with the switches further comprising a switch type.

27. (***Previously Presented***) The system of Claim 23, wherein processors operable to display the information comprise processors operable to color-code a status of the bridge ports.

28. (***Previously Presented***) The system of Claim 23, the interactive display comprising a first and a second window, the first window comprising a hierarchical tree structure of all managed switches, the second window comprising a tabular display of bridge port information of a managed switch selected in the hierarchical tree structure.

29. (***Previously Presented***) The system of Claim 28, wherein the second window provides a field in which a user of the interactive display can view the propagation status of a plurality of bridge ports of the managed switch selected in the hierarchical tree structure.

30. (***Previously Presented***) The system of Claim 29, wherein the propagation status of any or all bridge ports of the managed switch are selected in the hierarchical tree structure.

31. (***Previously Presented***) The system of Claim 23, the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status of one or more of all bridge ports of a single switch, a plurality of bridge ports of a single switch, and a plurality of bridge ports of multiple switches.

32. (***Previously Presented***) The system of Claim 31, wherein the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status comprises the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status from a single window.

33. (***Previously Presented***) The system of Claim 23, the interactive display operable to allow a user to change the propagation status of all bridge ports of a single switch, a plurality of bridge ports of a single switch, and all bridge ports of multiple switches.

34. (***Previously Presented***) A method for displaying information associated with switches in an enterprise system, comprising:

retrieving information associated with a plurality of switches, wherein each switch of the plurality of switches includes one or more bridge ports, wherein the information associated with the plurality of switches includes at least identifiers of the bridge ports of each switch and propagation statuses of the bridge ports, and wherein propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridge port should be polled to obtain its current status;

displaying all the retrieved identifiers in a hierarchical tree structure through an interactive display, the interactive display comprising a first and a second window, the first window comprising a hierarchical tree structure of all managed switches, the second window comprising a tabular display of bridge port information of a managed switch selected in the hierarchical tree structure;

receiving through the interactive display updates to at least one propagation status of at least one of the bridge ports of at least one of the switches;

changing the at least one propagation status based on the updates; and

displaying the changed at least one propagation status through the interactive display.

35. (***Previously Presented***) The method of claim 1, wherein propagation status includes an indication of whether or not a bridging port should be polled for its current status.

36. (***Previously Presented***) The software of claim 12, wherein the information associated with the plurality of switches further includes at least the hierarchical relationships of the plurality of switches, wherein display of the information for the plurality of switches further includes display of a hierarchical representation of the plurality of switches derived from the hierarchical relationships and wherein a representation of a switch on the hierarchical representation includes an indication of the propagation status of all bridge ports associated with the switch, wherein the indication includes a first indication when all associated bridge ports are propagating, a second indication when no associated bridge ports are propagating, and a third indication when some of the associated bridge ports are propagating.

Appendix B: Evidence Appendix

None.

Appendix C: Related Proceedings Appendix

None.